

**Philip J. Ryan Oral History Interview – RFK#2, 02/12/1974**  
Administrative Information

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**Biographical Note**

Philip J. Ryan was Assistant United States Attorney under Robert F. Kennedy and executive assistant to Robert F. Kennedy. This interview focuses on Ryan's move from Robert F. Kennedy's [RFK] campaign staff to the Senate office, setting up Ryan's Senate office in New York, and relations with the press in New York, among other issues.

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## Oral History Interview

Of

Philip J. Ryan

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## Philip J. Ryan – RFK #2

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Second Oral History Interview

with

PHILIP J. RYAN, JR.

February 12, 1974  
New York, New York

By Roberta W. Greene

For the Robert F. Kennedy Oral History Project  
of the Kennedy Library

GREENE: Okay. Why don't you start by explaining how you got from the campaign staff to the Senate office?

RYAN: My recollection, Bobbie, is that shortly after the election, that is, within a matter of days, we started closing down first the suites that we had at the various hotels and then lastly 9 East 42nd Street, which is where the campaign headquarters actually was. That took place probably within two weeks following the election. At that time, the Democratic state committee was operating out of the mezzanine level of the Statler Hilton, and they invited us over there because there was adequate space. That had been used for the [Lyndon B. Johnson] [Hubert H. Humphrey] (Lyndon B.) Johnson (Hubert H.) Humphrey operation, so that there was not only space but there was office furniture and equipment. So a group of us moved over to the Statler Hilton, and in fact operated out of the Statler Hilton until probably February of 1965, because it took that long to select a site, and then prepare the site as an office for the senator, which ended up in the Post Office

Building over on Lexington Avenue and 45th.

GREENE: Was (Jacob K.) <sup>[Jacob K. Javits]</sup> Javits already in that building, by the way?

RYAN: Yes.

GREENE: Yeah. Yes.

RYAN: Yeah, he had an office on the fifth floor, <sup>and</sup> The Post Office had an operation on the fourth floor that they were thinking of closing down. They in fact did close that down and <sup>per</sup>formed some construction in there, which gave us adequate offices.

GREENE: Yes. Was it desirable to be in the same building as Javits?

RYAN: I don't think it made any difference. I'm sure we thought about it at the time, but I don't think anybody could find any reason why it wasn't acceptable.

GREENE: Yeah. Were you asked by the senator himself, or by whom, to join the Senate staff?

RYAN: I'm not sure if there was anybody that spoke to me first, but I remember when I was in fact asked, was in the suite at the Carlyle [Hotel] by the senator himself. I think that that was the first time that there had been any mention of it, and I think it was directly by the senator himself.

GREENE: Yeah. Had you been hoping for that?

RYAN: Well, about four months before that I had started a law firm and that is where I was going following the election. That gave me some pause because I had made certain promises to two other lawyers to go into law practice with them. The first thing I had to do was to sit down with them and discuss it. What we agreed to was that if I did it for no more than a year, it certainly wouldn't hurt us and nobody knew whether or not it'd be of any help. So when they



agreed, I certainly agreed because I looked forward to the position, and the only thing that stood in my way was the commitment that I had made to my two partners.

GREENE: Was it clear right from the beginning that you would be the head of the office?

RYAN: Yes. I think the request was along that line. In fact, I think it was quite a while before anybody else was approached to become a staff member in the office. I think Tom <sup>Johnston</sup> (Thomas M. Jr.) Johnston was the next one who was hired and I don't think that took place for probably three weeks, and I don't think it was until about February that <sup>Polly</sup> ~~Pauline~~ Feingold <sup>[Pauline Feingold]</sup> was hired. Those were really the three staff assistants in the office. The rest were secretaries and drivers and so forth.

GREENE: Were you consulted at all on the hiring of either Johnston or Polly Feingold?

RYAN: Yes, on both. Tom, I was a hundred percent in favor of. I remember having certain reservations about Polly and I think that's part of the reason why it took so long.

GREENE: What were your reservations?

RYAN: Oh, one of motivation, one of loyalty.

GREENE: Based on your experience in the campaign?

RYAN: Yeah, and her background and her views, and also one of industry. Polly was not one of the most industrious persons that I'd. . . . She had a lot of outside interests and they frequently came in the way of her office work. But we, after a fairly thorough review, couldn't really find anybody that had the background that Polly had to offer the job to, so Polly was hired and <sup>you know</sup> did a respectable

job.

GREENE: When you first spoke to the senator, did he define what he had in mind for you, or was it a kind of open-ended?

RYAN: Well, I think the discussion was, if I can remember it, Bobby<sup>e</sup>, was that he was going to have two operations; one in Washington and one in New York. <sup>[Joseph F. Dolan]</sup> ~~(Joseph F.)~~ Joe Dolan would run the one in Washington and I'd run the one in New York. The one in New York would have at least one satellite office, and maybe more, to cover the state. There was some thought given to Buffalo, to Syracuse, to Albany, to have upstate offices that would report to New York, and then New York to Washington, and that I'd be in charge of the New York operation--not only the administration and the staff responsibilities, but also the political network throughout the state, which was what I found probably most intriguing. So that there was a defined position at the time that I accepted.

GREENE: Did he make clear how he wanted the office to operate, where he wanted the emphasis? Did he want it to be on service to constituents, on special projects, on. . . .

RYAN: Yeah, I think that basically, of course we all assumed that we had the responsibility to service constituents, and we were to develop a volunteer staff to assist us in servicing the constituents. I think the emphasis was on special projects. I think, what I took from the conversation was the fact that he felt that most legislators are defensive; they react to situations that come to them that they must react to. What he wanted to do was to get out and to really find out what was going on and get into those projects, to analyze them, to meet with the people, and then to find out just



exactly what the problem was and to see if there was anything that we could do to correct it. I think your Bedford-Stuyvesant, for example, project was something that certainly didn't come to us, it was something that we went to. And there were many other examples during that first year of getting out and finding where the problems were, trying to analyze them and discuss them with him and to see what position he wanted to take on them. So I think that's where the real emphasis was, but not at the expense of not servicing the constituents. That always remained a responsibility that we had and one that we had to treat, and treat in a timely fashion.

GREENE: Okay. Before we get back to the office, let's go on to the fact-finding tour that you made--you and Tom Johnston and the senator and Joe Dolan, I guess, went along on part of it--throughout the state, do you remember, between the election and Christmas?

RYAN: Yes.

GREENE: What do you remember about that?

RYAN: Well, I think, right in line with what we were just discussing, Bobbie, it was not, the idea was not to wait until the folks upstate came to us with problems. The idea was, now that he was the senator, or the senator-elect, to go back, first, to thank them, and then secondly, to assemble the people that we <sup>thought</sup> felt were appropriate at a hearing like that, from both parties and from public office, and to give them an opportunity to just stand up and to say exactly what it was that they expected of him now that he was the senator representing the state. I think that, well, what we did was, we recorded each of those meetings and came back and transcribed the recordings, and prepared papers based upon those as to what some of the problems

were upstate. Some that had strictly local overtones that weren't really in the office or should not have been in the office of a United States senator but that could be referred to local office-holders. And then took those that a United States senator should get involved in, and that was the beginning of our special projects.

GREENE: Can you remember some specifics?

RYAN: Well, there were major problems with interstate highways, which is a federal problem because it's funded 90 percent by federal funds. There were some highways that didn't seem to make great sense that had been proposed and some that even had been funded. There were others that would have made far greater sense to service Upstate New York which had been disregarded. You know, we got into that. There were certain waterway problems up in north New York that we were exposed to. There were a number of problems under the poverty program. Education was mentioned and stressed at every one of the meetings, the failure of the federal government to really respond to the needs of the people. At each of those meetings we had two or three of the local educators and, as usual, they were fairly outspoken. That became a very important part of his emphasis later on.

GREENE: Did a lot of political contacts come out of this?

RYAN: Well, these were not specifically politicians that we met with.

GREENE: Right.

RYAN: These were people that were involved in local government. I guess consequently they were politicians, but they were not the politicians that wielded any power in the local area; they were ones that addressed



themselves to issues in the local area, and that's what we were specifically ~~were~~ looking for. Although we would certainly touch base with the county chairman, and in most instances the county chairman was present at the meeting, but he was not an important part of the meeting.

GREENE: He would have been someone, I guess, that you would already have known anyway, right?

RYAN: For the most part. Even those that were not friendly prior to the election now all of a sudden became friendly. But that was not really the purpose of the trip and was certainly not stressed. We certainly met with them and talked to them. A lot of them were concerned because we had announced that we were going to have offices upstate, and they weren't sure whether or not that was some plan to undercut their power, so that there were certain problems that they wanted at least to discuss with the senator during the course of that trip. That again was not the real purpose for the trip.

GREENE: Well, is there anything else on that? Who was making the arrangements and doing the advance work on that trip? Did you do at least some of that?

RYAN: Yeah, I think that. . . . I don't remember that we had any specific advance men. I think we used Toby Foote, who had been doing advance work and who at the time, I believe, was on the staff of the state committee; and Tom Johnston, and myself. I don't believe that anybody else was involved in the setting up of that trip or traveling on the trip. I think you mentioned before that Joe Dolan joined us.

GREENE: I thought he might have gone out on some of that. No? You don't remember that?

RYAN: I don't recall Joe Dolan coming. It seems to me that somebody joined us. I don't remember that it was Joe. It might have been Adam <sup>Adam</sup> ~~(Walinsky)~~ or it might have been Peter <sup>Peter B.</sup> ~~(Edelman)~~, but somebody, I believe, joined us for a part of the trip, but I don't believe started with us nor ended up with us. But I do believe they joined us at a couple of stops along the way. But I think it was one of the legislative assistants, either Adam or Peter.

GREENE: Could you tell much about the senator's reaction to this whole trip? No?

RYAN: No. No. Bobby, I knew he knew it was necessary, I knew he knew it was the beginning of--or his introduction, now, as a senator--to some of the problems that he was going to have to address himself to, and there were many. But I don't remember a specific reaction that he had to the trip.

GREENE: Did he do fairly well in this type of get-together?

RYAN: Well, that's where he was at his best.

GREENE: Yeah. Yes.

RYAN: I guess he was at his best on an interchange with students, but certainly at his second best he was with, now, on an interchange involving issues with, at an open meeting of that sort. So, no, he handled himself very well. Where he had to make a response, and of course there were certain things that came up, especially those that involved local issues where responses weren't necessary.

GREENE: Was it your job primarily to keep track of what was going on at these



meetings in terms of names and suggestions? Whose job was it to funnel the information you were getting into a useful format so that if there was a need, you would be certain that there was a response?

RYAN: Well, I think at that time it wasn't that well defined. I think that both Tom and I were on the trip. I don't think we paid specific attention to that aspect of it during the trip because we had a recording device with us which recorded just what took place. I think that for specific assignments, they came up later on, oh, within a month or two following that, when those tapes were transcribed and we now were in the actual operation of a Senate office. Those issues then more properly fell under Tom Johnston, and certain of them under Polly. If it had to do with coordination <sup>with</sup> a government agency, Polly would handle it. If it had to do with getting involved with a local issue that hadn't been refined to the point where it could be referred to a federal agency, then Tom would take it on. But that came about two months following the trip.

GREENE: What about funnelling some of this to the Senate office in Washington?

RYAN: Well, we would do our initial work in New York, and that is, to get involved in it, in the problem, whatever it was, and to define it and then to send it through to Washington, and then follow up on it and make certain that we got some kind of a response, some kind of a position, some kind of direction as to whether to pursue it further, whether there was really not very much that we could do, whether it was outside of our jurisdiction. And then after that initial response, whether it came directly from Washington, or came from the senator himself when he was in New York after he had been

presented with the problem, we'd do then what was in his best interests. And usually it was to get involved. There weren't too many that we backed away from.

GREENE: Okay. What about the setting up of the office? Did you do the hiring of the lower-level personnel, the secretaries and . . .

RYAN: Well, one of the secretaries was a secretary during the course of the campaign and, I believe, Joe Dolan's secretary. She was not only a good secretary but one that really wanted the job, so that there was never any question as to whether or not she'd be hired. As to the rest of the staff . . .

GREENE: Who is that, by the way? Maybe this would help.

RYAN: Do you have that list? It was the girl with the. . . . Swannie [Swannie Heinstchel von Heinegg].

GREENE: Oh, Swannie Heinstchel von Heinegg.

RYAN: Yeah, there was never any question about Swannie's being a member of the staff. But as to the others, I did the interviewing. And when I finally came to a candidate that I thought should be hired, next time the senator came to town I set up an interview and he, in fact, hired the people, but I did the screening of them. [James] (James) Jim Malvie, who was our driver, was easy to hire. He had been with us during the campaign and with us following the campaign, so there was no real screening for Jim Malvie.

GREENE: Did he work around the office when the senator wasn't in town?

RYAN: He handled the references to federal agencies where there was just no question as to the issue. If a constituent had written to a federal agency seeking some advice and had not gotten a response and then wrote to us, it was a simple matter of putting what we



used to call a buck slip on the face of the letter and sending it through to the agency and then the agency had to respond to us. When the agency responded to us, for the most part it was just paraphrasing their letter and sending it back to the constituent. It was a fairly routine job and Jim handled that. Jim had been a former ~~sargeant~~<sup>sargeant</sup> or lieutenant in the police department and had been used to handling a lot of paperwork, so Jim did perform that function when he wasn't involved with the senator when he was in town. ~~So~~<sup>So</sup> as to the other secretaries and members of the staff, there weren't that many that were on the payroll. Most of them were volunteers.

GREENE: Was that true right from the beginning? Did you start to gather a volunteer group right away?

RYAN: Well, we had an awful lot that had been involved in the campaign that wanted to continue, and it went really from campaign staff workers right into volunteer office workers, to a great degree. However, the volunteer corps, so to speak, changed in complexion as the office grew. Lots of the people that get involved in campaigns don't really have the competence to work on the issues that we were involved in at that time, after the office began operating. So that we did make an effort later on to recruit a different type of person, that could sit down and analyze a problem and write it up, which usually is slightly different from the type of person that is of great assistance on a campaign but just isn't able to do that type of work.

GREENE: Did you find yourself giving some of these volunteers a substantial amount of responsibility, or did you hold them to more or less routine matters?

RYAN: Oh, no. There were some volunteers that were just given a project and cut loose. There was no way that they were given any authority to commit, at any point during their efforts, but they were given as much authority as they could handle or we felt that they could handle in regard to a project. Some just took projects on and completed them, and did marvelous work.

GREENE: There was never any resentment on any of their parts that they might have been doing work comparable to paid staff and yet they were volunteers, or was this a . . . I'm not sure exactly, are you talking about a Manhattan housewife who has hours on her hand, and she's educated and she's bright, and so she comes in as a volunteer and the money would not make that much difference? Is that largely . . .

RYAN: Those were some.

GREENE: . . . ~~THE~~ kind of person?

RYAN: Others were attorneys with major law firms that could get some time off to do

GREENE: Oh, I see.

RYAN: . . . ~~TO~~ do this as a public service. Others were students and graduate students that wanted to do some <sup>thing</sup> more meaningful during their student years.

GREENE: So they weren't the kind of people who even would have wanted to take the job on?

RYAN: Most of them couldn't have taken a fulltime job on if it had been offered, so we really didn't have that problem, at least not to my knowledge.

GREENE: Right. [Interruption]



INTERRUPTION

GREENE: What kind of a--the word clearance probably isn't very good but--  
what kind of a clearance system did you have in terms of author-  
izing projects and actions?

RYAN: Well, you know, it was a problem, in a way, but it wasn't really a  
problem. We had the senator in New York on an average better than  
one day a week, and much more so in the beginning, so that we really  
didn't have a problem in writing up a request for authority. All we  
had to do was to mention it to him in the car or mention it to him  
when he was in the office, and if he told us to go ahead, that's all  
we needed. So that for that first year that I was there, Bobbie,  
it wasn't really a major problem. Everybody was feeling <sup>their</sup> ~~that~~ way  
during that first year, everybody was confused, everybody was all  
of a sudden saddled with responsibilities that they had never had  
before. As to getting clearance to go into these projects that we  
were trying to initiate, my recollection is that the bulk of it  
came directly from the senator, and he either said yes or no,  
so that in that regard it wasn't really a problem.

GREENE: Were the lines of authority between the Washington office and your  
office always clear? Was that ever a problem in terms of juris-  
diction? You know, what was your responsibility and what was  
theirs?

RYAN: There wasn't any great overlapping.

GREENE: No?

RYAN: The time when you really have a reporting problem or a staff prob-  
lem develop where there are jurisdictional problems is when there  
is tremendous overlapping. We had our job to do and they had

theirs. Because there was little overlapping, we never got into any jurisdictional disputes. There were times when we would recommend a trip, and in the course of that trip, meeting with certain people. There were times when there were questions raised as to not only the trip but some of the people that we had recommended that he meet with, but they didn't develop into any great jurisdictional disputes. Normally, we made another series of telephone calls and agreed that it was either right or wrong. There were times when Washington felt that we should get involved in certain fundraising events. I remember one in particular for Congressman John Dow. <sup>[John G. Dow]</sup> of That had all the earmarks of a major jurisdictional dispute, but it worked itself out. That was one time when we were told to get involved in something and it didn't seem proper to me, but it worked its way out.

greene: Why would that be?

RYAN: Well, because we were going to try to take <sup>fifty</sup> 50 percent of the proceeds of the dinner because we were presenting the major attraction.

I thought the major attraction should be there without demanding <sup>fifty</sup> 50 percent of the proceeds, so I disagreed violently.

GREENE: <sup>The office</sup> He always would take <sup>fifty</sup> 50 percent?

RYAN: Yeah.

GREENE: Isn't that unusual?

RYAN: Yes. And as it turned out, the senator did not appear on the night in question and we relinquished our claim to <sup>fifty</sup> 50 percent of the proceeds but, . . .

GREENE: Who would have made a decision like that?



RYAN: Joe. It was to help defray some of the expenses in the campaign that were still unpaid. There weren't too many people in the state of New York that felt that Robert Kennedy couldn't pay his own campaign expenses. The feeling was, quite the contrary, that poor Congressman John Dow, who didn't have any money, and needed every penny that he could raise at those fundraisers, was not being given a fair shake.

GREENE: Was the senator aware of this particular, *o o o o* ?

RYAN: I assume so. I mean, at the point the decision was made, I assume he was. I know he was later on, because I discussed it directly with him. But aside from a few things like that, I don't recall any jurisdictional disputes between the two offices.

GREENE: Did you work fairly well together, do you think?

RYAN: I would say so. I don't recall any strains between the two. I just think, Bobbie, it really comes down to the fact that they had their job to do and we had ours and everybody went about their own work, and we didn't have time for any petty problems.

GREENE: What about, I've heard so much about Kennedy preference for sort of a hang loose, unstructured, let everybody kind of do as much as they can competently handle approach to both offices. Was this a problem at all, particularly, perhaps to some of the younger members of the staff, where they really needed more direction, or did they get it even if there was a lot of freedom at the top?

RYAN: I think it's the latter. I would certainly <sup>think</sup> that both in Washington and I know in New York, that if some young member of the staff was assigned to a particular project, you worked with them until you felt that they understood what it was that you wanted them to do,

and then you reviewed carefully what it was that they did in the beginning until you saw that they were handling it properly. But from that point on, certainly, there was nobody looking over their shoulders. You know, there were mistakes made because of that policy, but there was also three times the amount of work done. If we were going to spend our full time reviewing what everybody on the staff was doing, we wouldn't have gotten a portion of the work that we got done.

GREENE: What about for you and Tom, <sup>?</sup> was that ever a problem, particularly in the beginning, in just knowing what you ought to be doing and feeling secure that you were doing what the senator wanted and what was in his best interests, or did you just feel your way around in it?

RYAN: Well, I think that both Tom and myself had that opportunity, on a very regular basis, to discuss a problem like that with the senator directly. So when he came to town, we'd have lists of things to discuss with him, and we'd go down those lists, either coming in from the airport in the car or going upstate or wherever it might be, or sitting at the Carlyle. He never seemed to mind going over those <sup>lists,</sup> ~~with us~~ and he never seemed to mind making his views clear on where we wanted advice.

GREENE: Would he also have a lot of questions for you, in terms of what you were doing, and had you followed up on this and that?

RYAN: Invariably, yes. Yeah, he . . .

GREENE: Kept track of what was going on, in ~~his~~ <sup>other words?</sup> ~~yeah.~~

RYAN: Very much so. And as you'd go down your list, he'd recall prior conversations concerning the same thing. Yes, he was, I suspect,



known for his followup. So before you brought something to his attention, you'd better have been pretty well aware of the problem.

GREENE: Well, can you discuss some of your own specific activities in the office, projects you might have gotten involved in, or some of the more salient ones, at least?

RYAN: Bobbie, I should be able to answer that question very easily and I can't. I guess it's what, <sup>3</sup> nine years ago or <sup>eight</sup> years ago.

GREENE: Yeah. <sup>Yes. It's</sup> A long time.

RYAN: All I know is that we'd get in early in the morning and work until late at night, and usually six if not seven days a week. There was an awful lot of work put out of the New York office, but I don't remember any specific contribution, other than just to see that what was passing through that office was done, and done in a timely fashion.

GREENE: Were you doing more of that, do you think? I mean, was Tom more involved in specific projects and you were

RYAN: Yes.

GREENE: . . . kind of overseeing the whole . . .

RYAN: Oh, there's no question.

GREENE: . . . operation?

RYAN: YEAH.

GREENE: Yeah. Yes,

RYAN: Tom took on certain projects, or certain of the projects that the office was involved in and handled them almost exclusively, and spent his time and his effort in getting involved in those projects and accomplishing something in regard to them. That was much more

Tom's role than the general administration of the office.

GREENE: To what extent did you see yourself <sup>as</sup>, or see your job, as sort of protecting the senator and preventing, shall we say, misuse of his political capital?

RYAN: Well, I think that <sup>it</sup> wasn't a major problem, but it certainly was something that you were always aware of; and that is, he was a pretty attractive figure from a political standpoint and there were people all over the state that were devising methods of using that in one way or another, either in their business interests or their political interests. I think that it was something that you were <sup>really</sup> always aware of. I don't/remember any infraction that got past us that amounted to anything seriously, but it was something that we had to be constatly aware of. But again, just after a while you got a feel for who was trying to use him and who wasn't.

GREENE: Can you be specific? Are there people ~~whot~~ come to mind that were a problem in this?

RYAN: There were requests from lawyers and politicians and union officals to meet with him on various occasions, and you couldn't just say ~~yes~~ because of the prominence in their profession or in their position. You had to really find out as best you could why it was that they wanted to meet with him. You did that on the ground that you wanted to make certain that he was briefed before the meeting, to make the meeting more meaningful. Then you could cull out a lot of those requests for meetings, and do it in a diplomatic and tactful way, because there was no real reason why the senator should meet with them. It was something that they wanted, <sup>that</sup> that was not in line really with what he was doing. There were a lot of those.



but you got kind of a feel after a while as to how to weed them out <sup>and</sup> who really wanted to bring something to his attention that was meaningful to him and who wanted something for themselves.

GREENE: When he came into the state and travelled, especially when he was in the upstate area, who would take care of advancing those trips and making the arrangements and making sure everything . . .

RYAN: Well, in the beginning, we'd do it all out of the New York office. After six months or so, we had an office in Syracuse. So that, for that first six-month period, if Tom or I couldn't do it, we'd call upon one of the advance men who worked during the course of the campaign to give us a hand, and they were always very good about doing that. Or we'd use Toby Foote, who was the staff member over at the state committee, who was very competent in doing that. After we had an upstate office, a good portion of the efforts along those lines ~~were~~ conducted out of the Syracuse office, so that our problem upstate sort of dwindled after (Gerald J.) Jerry Bruno <sup>[Gerald J.]</sup> took over.

GREENE: You know, I attempted to find the date when Jerry Bruno took over at the last minute yesterday and I never did come across it. He did come on <sup>while</sup> ~~when~~ you were still there, didn't he?

RYAN: Yes. He probably came on in around July of '65, because I think that it then took him probably a month or a month and a half to move into the Syracuse area, to find an office, to open the office, to furnish it and to get it set up. My recollection is that Jerry was operating out of that office with a small staff, probably for four months or so before I left, so that I would fix the time sometime around July, of '65.

GREENE: Did you have any part at all in his selection?

RYAN: No.

GREENE: Or <sup>any strong</sup> ~~at least some~~ feelings about it?

RYAN: I had no part in it, and I had strong feelings about it.

GREENE: Which way?

RYAN: Against.

GREENE: Why was that?

RYAN: I had been working for six months to find what I thought was the right candidate for the office and found two, either one of which I thought could have done a marvelous job in running the office.

GREENE: Were they people that had been associated with the Kennedys?

RYAN: No.

GREENE: They aren't people that we would know.

RYAN: No. One was a former district attorney from Manhattan who had agreed to take a substantial cut in salary and to move to Syracuse in order to do it; The other was a lawyer in Rochester who had agreed to discontinue his practice and move to Syracuse; both of whom could have handled the issues of upstate and in my opinion done a far superior job to a Jerry Bruno; both of whom were New Yorkers, and both of whom I thought had the right approach to the job. I was very, very much opposed to Jerry Bruno.

GREENE: How close did they get to hiring one of these two fellows?

RYAN: Well, the senator interviewed both, and his response to the first was, "There's something wrong because I don't understand a young lawyer taking a big cut in salary and moving to Syracuse."

GREENE: Was that his total comment?



RYAN: Yeah, "and therefore I don't trust him." The second one was that, "I think that the particular candidate from Rochester moving on to Syracuse is trying to develop a power base to probably run for public office himself." <sup>Well, as</sup> ~~whereas~~, it's turned out he never has run for public office. ~~He~~ He never intended to run for public office, and he would have done a great job, in my opinion, running the Syracuse office. However, both were rejected and Jerry Bruno was brought in from wherever.

GREENE: Wisconsin.

RYAN: I was opposed to that. I was <sup>a hundred</sup> ~~100~~ percent in support of not only one office upstate but maybe even more, but I was just opposed to the staffing of that one. And that, apparently, was a decision made by the senator himself.

GREENE: He had at one point, I know, considered <sup>[Walter J. Sheridan]</sup> Walter Sheridan. Do you remember that?

RYAN: Yes. And I'm glad that it turned out the way it turned out, because I don't think that Walter was the right guy.

GREENE: Well, you had real problems with him during--not problems with him, <sup>but you</sup>  
...

RYAN: Well, I just . . .

GREENE: . . . ~~BUT~~ just problems.

RYAN: . . . ~~DIDN't~~ <sup>a</sup> have the confidence in Walter Sheridan that I thought  
...

GREENE: During the campaign.

RYAN: . . . ~~WOULD~~ have been necessary for that office. After all, if the fellow upstate did an excellent job, that was in my best interest because it took that much of a burden off my shoulders, ~~so~~ <sup>so</sup> I was

certainly concerned about who was selected for upstate. And if someone was either going to cause trouble upstate or was not going to do the type of job that we wanted, that was going to put a burden on my shoulders, so I certainly was very much involved in, or attempts to get involved in, the selection of the candidate for upstate. And as it turned out, someone was selected that I very much disapproved.

GREENE: Did the senator know how strongly you felt?

RYAN: ~~Yh-huh. Mm-hmm?~~ Yes.

GREENE: Did he ever give you any reasons why he made that decision?

RYAN: No. Apparently there was a great deal of confidence in the loyalty of a Jerry Bruno, and sometimes loyalty or this quest for loyalty I think clouded judgment. But that was the rationale for hiring a Jerry Bruno that was given to me.

GREENE: What was, from what you were able to observe in the few months that you were there after he came on, did you have much of a feel for the kind of thing he was doing?

RYAN: Yeah. I don't think the paperwork was being done in the office, which reflected on our office, And there were certain problems created upstate from a political standpoint, which were predictable.

GREENE: Because of his personality, or the fact he wasn't a New Yorker?

RYAN: Well, the fact that he wasn't a New Yorker, you know, he had one strike against him when he went up there; and the fact that he was abrasive was the second strike; and the fact that he just thought that he was going to take over the whole state and undercut county chairmen was, in my opinion, a third strike. And he certainly did



the latter, and I thought created far more ill will than he created good will.

GREENE: Was your objection to Walter Sheridan that you felt he was really going to use it to run for office? I know that that was one of the things you felt . . .

RYAN: There's no question in my mind.

GREENE: . . . *back during the* campaign.

RYAN: No question. And when the senator responded to the candidate from Rochester as using it as a steppingstone, I had a pretty good chuckle, because that's exactly what I felt Walter Sheridan was doing. *But. . .*

GREENE: Yes.

RYAN: And I also didn't think that Walter Sheridan was the type that was going to buckle down and get into an office at *eight* o'clock in the morning and work for twelve hours and do a lot of paperwork that nobody really wanted to do but had to be done.

GREENE: *Do you know why he turned. . .* Did he turn the job down, or the senator made the decision in favor of Bruno?

RYAN: I don't really know whether it was ever specifically offered to Walter. I think it was, *and I think that. . .*

GREENE: I vaguely remember that it was, too, yes.

RYAN: *And I think that* there was a conversation between the two, and that it had ended up that Walter would become involved in Washington, or involved in other aspects, and not have to take on the responsibility of running that office. So I think that it was offered, and I think *that* after the two of them thought about it, that is, the senator and Walter, that they decided that maybe they ought to look for another candidate. But I think if Walter wanted it, he

could have had it.

GREENE: Okay. Can you think of political groups or individuals who really required a lot of, I hate to use the word courting, but a lot of attention in that first year in an effort to either keep them on your side or bring them onto your side or get some cooperation out of them?

RYAN: Well, there was certainly one group that got attention way out of proportion, and that was the group on the West Side of Manhattan called the reform group. They demanded and got an audience almost any time they wanted one, and the value gained from that I thought was very marginal or minimal.

GREENE: Why was that, when the senator so openly, you know, was frustrated by that type of person, . . .

RYAN: I don't know.

GREENE: . . . ~~THE~~ way they operated?

RYAN: Of the group, there was Senator (Manfred) Ohrenstein, who used to grate on the senator, but he'd always see him; <sup>[Manfred Ohrenstein]</sup> There was (Mrs.)<sup>m</sup> Ronnie Eldridge who I think he really liked, who was pretty good; and then there was <sup>[Jerome Kretchmer]</sup> (Jerome) Kretchmer and <sup>[Albert H. Blumenthal]</sup> (Albert H.) Blumenthal, who normally were just screaming about something. And if anything of any value came out of any of those meetings, it was probably out of Ronnie Eldridge and not the other three, but he always agreed to see them any time they wanted to see him. It was way out of proportion, I think, to the value that they added.

GREENE: Do you think ~~that~~--I suppose this is really a hypothetical question, but <sup>^</sup>that maybe it was because they were sort of the intellectuals and the Jewish intellectual types that were never particularly



favorable to him, and it was kind of a challenge to win over that type of group?

RYAN: Well, I had never thought of it that way. I guess they have been characterized as the intellectual type in the paper, but from the conversations and the amount of value that they added to the senator's intelligence, I would have to seriously question that. I think the real problem with that was that everybody knew, that is, those not members of that group knew the attention that that group got, and I think that that's what hurt, not so much so the fact that he didn't get anything out of those meetings, but the fact that . . .

GREENE: Others resented it?

RYAN: . . . those that were not of the same persuasion resented the amount of time, <sup>and effort</sup> ~~actually~~ that he spent with them. And There was a definite imbalance, and it was apparent.

GREENE: Is that the kind of thing you ever discussed with him in these terms?

RYAN: Yeah, but I never got very far.

GREENE: You never got a clear idea what was going <sup>through</sup> to his head on it?

RYAN: No. ~~I know that, well,~~ the way that I handled it usually was to say that we have these requests, and, you know, I would feel strongly that this get priority. And on that same list if there was a group of regulars and there was a group from the West Side, the West Side got the priority and the others didn't. And as apparent as it was to me at the time, it was also apparent to others around the state, and specifically in New York City. The West Side of Manhattan was only a very small fraction of the city of New York,

and the others resented it, I think.

GREENE: Did you ever have to take the blame for that kind of thing? people would feel that you weren't making their case strongly enough, or that you were favoring one side over the other?

RYAN: Well, constantly, because I was charged with his scheduling while he was in the city, and if somebody asked to meet with him and even though I had recommended it, if I was turned down, I had to take the blame. But, I mean, that didn't bother me, <sup>Heck,</sup> that was my job. What bothered me was just that I really felt that there was an imbalance <sup>that</sup> and I couldn't do very much about it.

GREENE: How much could you do, or did you do, to maintain or improve relations with the political figures, <sup>[Robert F. Wagner]</sup> (Robert F.) Wagner and... .

RYAN: Well, I had very little to do with Wagner because Wagner was out of office, <sup>at the time</sup> you know. <sup>[John V. Lindsay]</sup> You know, John Lindsay came in in... .

GREENE: '65.

RYAN: Oh, '65, all right.

GREENE: <sup>yes,</sup> Yeah. The first two years, I think.

RYAN: You're right. Well, I don't remember doing anything with Wagner so I don't think, I don't think that I did very much with him. <sup>GREENE:</sup> Would that have been handled, do you think, from the Washington office, perhaps by Dolan, or the senator himself?

RYAN: I just don't ever remember even visiting city hall or Gracie Mansion during that period. [INTERRUPTION] END TAPE 1



BEGIN TAPE II

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GREENE: . . . ~~Julius~~ <sup>Julius C.C. Edelstein</sup> Edelstein.

RYAN: Well, we did use it was Julius Edelstein, wasn't it?

GREENE: Right.

RYAN: We did use Julie for some background information on issues, We did use him for his recommendation as to certain appointments;

but I don't remember anything other than just some telephonic contacts with Julie, and I remember no--well, there might very well have been, I just don't remember any major meetings with Bob Wagner during that period.

GREENE: What about with Javits and his staff? How much of a relationship was there?

RYAN: I had practically none. I remember early in the game having lunch with his administrative assistant--and don't even remember what his name was. But I think he was a classmate of Tom Johnston's. And I think that the bulk of the relationship between our office and Javits's office, which was minimal, was done through Tom and Javits's administrative assistant in New York.

GREENE: Maybe. . . .

RYAN: If you have his name listed. . . .

GREENE: Yeah, Javits's. But the state office is underneath it.

RYAN: Well, I don't remember ~~[scribble]~~ <sup>Aurelio</sup> Dick Or <sup>[Richard Aurelio]</sup> being there at the time.

GREENE: This is the '65 list, but, you know, those things are often inaccurate.

RYAN: My recollection was that Dick <sup>Aurelio</sup> at that point was working for Lindsay. Even if he was on the Senate payroll, he was working

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for Lindsay in Lindsay's quest for the mayoralty.

GREENE: Probably. Very possibly.

RYAN: And the name here is [←] Jerry Manges [Gerard H. Manges] and that doesn't really ring a bell, no. There was someone there that I believe had gone to school with Tom Johnston, and Tom handled a good portion of the relationship with the Javits office, which was not very great.

GREENE: Did you find a lot of . . . [INTERRUPTION] What about things coming out of the '64 campaign commitments that . . . [INTERRUPTION] Okay. I was going to ask you when we were interrupted about commitments from the '64 campaign-- I'm thinking mainly of political commitments, I guess--that you had to react to. Or wasn't that your job?

RYAN: Yes, it was. But the amount of patronage that a United States senator has is relatively small, and the requests that can be made of a United States senator are small. There were openings on the federal bench here in New York but most of those were handled by [Joseph F.] Joe Dolan who had previously done that for the Department of Justice. Joe would take recommendations in regard to those openings from the New York office and . . .

GREENE: Would he just take them or would he solicit them?

RYAN: No. No. Yeah, there were times when they were soliciting.

GREENE: He would really solicit them?

RYAN: And we also, in response to a request from Joe, would check out certain people through our own sources. [INTERRUPTION] . . . federal judgeships which we did work on, and probably to a limited extent, there were postmaster appointments all over the state,



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which is something that we got heavily involved in. We were aware of every opening as they occurred. We solicited recommendations locally. Frequently they were fought because there were contesting parties for the position. We would do our analysis and make a recommendation. That was something that was almost exclusively handled out of the New York office. Aside from that and some minor patronage, like getting jobs for people at the regional office of the post office, which <sup>was</sup> ~~is~~ something that we could do, there weren't very many commitments that grew out of the '64 campaign, or at least none that I can remember offhand.

GREENE: Would ~~[Stephen E.]~~ <sup>[Stephen E. Smith]</sup> Steve Smith get involved at all in political things like that?

RYAN: Well, I don't know whether or not he'd get involved in the appointment of a judge. I would doubt it. But if he did, that would have been done with Joe. As far as the other appointments that were handled out of the New York office, Steve would not get involved with them unless there was a major problem. We had one from an area around Albany someplace, <sup>it</sup> ~~it~~ might have been Schenectady, where there was a major problem, and one that was very heavily contested. And that was an appointment where we did a briefing memo, oh, maybe a dozen pages or so, interviewed the various parties that were proposing candidates, ran a qualifications check on the candidates, and then I had a meeting with the senator himself and he made the decision. But the real decision was, who to support? It was <sup>not</sup> who to appoint as postmaster, but it was whose candidate to support. So you had a political consi-

deration there. If you had selected the wrong man for postmaster, that was an indication to everybody else in the county as to who you were supporting, because it was known whose candidate he was. So that was the only one that I know that the senator got involved in, at least in that first year. The rest were fairly routine.

GREENE: Were there other things that you'd work with Steve Smith on?

RYAN: Trying to hire additional staff and <sup>getting the</sup> ~~get him~~ to pay for them, ~~Trying~~ to get money to do certain things that were outside of our budget. There were certain times when there were going to be meetings in New York where Steve would get involved, but his involvement was not great from my standpoint.

GREENE: How <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ he to work with?

RYAN: Steve is very easy. Steve has one qualification, I think, that overshadows all others and that is that he's certainly not afraid to make a decision and to make a quick one, and that makes him very easy to work with. He doesn't always agree with you, but at least he'll make a quick decision, and consequently he's a joy to work with.

GREENE: Would he follow through on things?

RYAN: I never really thought about it, but certainly I don't have any feeling that he didn't so I assume that he did.

GREENE: You know, in terms of funding the New York office--the city office and I guess the upstate office, too--how much of that came out of Kennedy's personal funds?

RYAN: Well, I don't really know eventually how much came out when the staff got as large as it did at the end of the first year, and I assume it even got larger after I left. But I do know, not



specifically, but I know that initially Joe and I sat down with the amount of money that was available through the Senate, and there were a number of people on the staff that were drawing fairly sizeable salaries for that time in history in '64--Joe and the legislative assistants and myself--which cut into the total amount that was available for the staff. You know, I could say, "I'm sure, without fear of contradiction that we fell far short of the total amount of money that was needed to support the staff, at least as it was constituted within the year after his election, and that had to be made up out of 200 Park (Avenue)". Now, as to the number of people in the New York office that were paid out of 200 Park, I don't remember anybody. I think that we all got checks right out of the Senate.

GREENE: Somebody told me, and I don't know if this is true, that what they would do is pay part of the salary out of Senate funds so that the person would be eligible for all the benefits, and then the difference would be made up by the family?

RYAN: I heard that.

GREENE: Does that . . .

RYAN: I heard that, Bobbie, but it was not done in New York. If it was done at all, it was done in Washington. But I've heard that that was being done. And I suspect that it had to be done because there was no way that the allocation to Senator Kennedy was sufficient to support the staff that he had, so the money had to come from someplace and I guess there was only one source, <sup>and</sup> that was Steve. But we didn't have any involvement with Steve in that regard in New York. When we did have extraordinary expenses, like



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the charter of an aircraft or hotel suites around the state or things like that, I'd just go over and get the money from Steve and pay the bills. But we did not support any of our staff. We were all fully on the Senate payroll.

GREENE: Are there any groups or individuals that you can think of in that first year that Robert Kennedy doesn't want to work with, that he doesn't like or thinks are dishonorable, or that create problems for you? I know you got into the choices part of it before, but is there anyone that he really just does not want to have anything to do with?

RYAN: Well, none that leap to mind. I'm sure there were some but none that I can think of offhand, Bobbie.

GREENE: In choosing, let's say, between the reformers and the regulars, as you described before, were there people among the regulars that he particularly didn't want to see and were there those that he would be willing to talk to?

RYAN: Well, there were some that he certainly felt closer to than others: the <sup>[Daniel P. O'Connell]</sup> ~~(Daniel P.)~~ Dan O'Connells, for instance, and the Peter Crottys <sup>[Peter J. Crotty]</sup> that were the first to support his brother and that were close friends of his father, he'd take a call from any time and, in fact, initiate calls to those men and people who were comparable. There was another group of county chairmen who supported him from early on, and of course there was the final group that did not support him until he was in fact elected. <sup>[INTERUPTION]</sup>

GREENE: Who would be in the first category besides O'Connell and -- who else did you -- I guess, <sup>[Charles A. Buckley]</sup> ~~(Charles A.)~~ Buckley and . . .



RYAN: Crotty.

GREENE: Where would you put <sup>[John F. English]</sup> Jack English? In the second group, --  
that was <sup>those</sup> that supported him first?

RYAN: Jack was somewhere between the first and the second, and probably tended towards the first group, because back in '60 Jack was a county leader and outspoken at the very beginning for John Kennedy. So I think Jack probably would fall very close to the first group. He didn't command the same type of respect because he was, you know, younger and the others demanded respect because of their age and their experience, but I'm sure that Jack was awfully close to the first group. Bobbie, without a list, it'd be awfully difficult. There were very few that fell into the first group. And I'd say that, oh, maybe half, close to half of the county chairmen fell into the second group, and I'd say that probably half, fell into the, or close to half, fell into the third group.

GREENE: And the treatment between groups two and three was pretty . . .

RYAN: Yeah. Although we didn't have a list, you know, of group two and group three.

GREENE: Yeah, I know but . . .

RYAN: Everybody knew. And the treatment was distinct. In fact most of the members of the third group knew where they stood, <sup>and</sup> We didn't have much of a problem because they didn't come forward too quickly.

GREENE: What about in the earlier period, the regulars, people like <sup>[Stanley Steingut]</sup> Steingut, <sup>[Joseph Zaretzki]</sup> and Travia, and Zaretzki. Do they come to mind?

RYAN: Well, those men are fairly experienced politicians. When they see something like a Robert Kennedy coming to New York and know he's serious, they are smart enough not to take any violent position

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against it, as some of those that fall into that third group that we discussed. They may not have been completely in support of him, but they certainly were smart enough to keep quiet about their failure to commit.

GREENE: How would he feel about them?

RYAN: Well, I think he ~~he~~ would not hesitate to, for instance, place a call to a Stanley Steingut, because you had to remember at the time that Stanley Steingut was the majority leader--or I mean Tony Travia was the speaker and Steingut was the majority leader, <sup>and</sup> If you want to work with the assembly of the state and work on that level, you don't want to upset either one of those men, because they turned out to be important later on.

GREENE: I was thinking more of how he, really, you know, felt about them personally.

RYAN: I don't remember any . . .

GREENE: Problems?

RYAN: . . . ~~REACTION~~ Reaction against either. I don't think he ever thought that either one was going to lead the state on to where he wanted to see it, because they just weren't that type; But I think much more of a practical approach to those men in that they held important positions in the state, and if you wanted to work with the legislature you were going to have to work with those men, as he in fact did later on.

GREENE: Okay. Can you think of things that you or others in the New York office came up with, proposals to get him involved in things that he balked at, that he just didn't want to do?

RYAN: There were some, I can recall that, <sup>and</sup> But specifically what they were, gee, I'd probably have to spend some time, go back and think about



that one, Bobbie. I just can't think of anything offhand that we thought was worth his involvement that he specifically balked at.

GREENE: Would he set the priorities and where the emphasis should go in terms of things that had been approved, or would you and Tom sort of decided that?

RYAN: Well, to go back to the way in which we operated, he was the one that approved most, you know, on a personal man-to-man basis, and he was the one that set the priorities. And he was the one that clearly directed the office. The only other person that could have had, offered any direction at that time was Joe Dolan, and that was more from an administrative standpoint than it was from the policy, as to the involvement of the senator or where he'd go or what he'd do. Joe didn't really get involved in that, at least, not while I was there; <sup>or</sup> if he did, I don't remember.

GREENE: What about the press in New York? Would you stay away from them, seek them out? How did you handle them?

RYAN: I didn't do either. I certainly didn't stay away from them and I certainly didn't seek them out. You didn't really have to do either. You know, they're omnipresent. They knew where he was going to be and what he was going to do. There were times, for instance, when we were going to make a trip, where we'd charter a bus and invite certain members of the press. So I suppose in that respect we did get involved to some degree. It was after I left that I think a fellow named ( ) Tim Hogan was hired. Having talked to Tim about, you know, his position on the staff at the time, it was my recollection then that Tim Hogan then was either assigned, or assumed the responsibility of creating

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a closer working relationship with the press. So there was a greater involvement later on, but I think we just took it pretty much as it came, with the exception of the few times when we would assemble members of the press, or with the specific exception of the few times when the senator wanted to meet with a particular person.

A I can remember ending up at <sup>eleven</sup> 11 o'clock at night with nothing to do and going over to the Plaza ~~(Hotel)~~ and sitting down in the Oak Room and having a drink and calling in ~~(James A.)~~ <sup>[James A. Wechsler]</sup> Jimmy Wechsler and having him come over and have a cocktail with us, or Murray Kempton. We put Murray Kempton, for instance, on our military academy advisory board, and he would review the applicants and participate in the decision as to who we should recommend. So there were certain members of the press that we did get involved, but press in general. . . .

GREENE: What about requests for interviews? Would you screen those and he would make the final decision, or ~~did~~ you work with Wes ~~(A. Wesley Barthelmes, Jr.)~~ <sup>[A. Wesley Barthelmes, Jr.]</sup> on it?

RYAN: Well, Wes wasn't there at the time. ~~(Edwin O.)~~ <sup>[Edwin O. Guthman]</sup> Ed Guthman was there when I was there.

GREENE: Well, Wes came in, gee, I forget the exact date, but it was. . . .

RYAN: He came at the end of, well. . . .

GREENE: It's very possible I'm forgetting the date. I thought it was. . . .

RYAN: Yeah. I think that Ed was there at least for <sup>1</sup> ~~at least~~ although not, you know, I don't think as a staff member, or maybe he was in the beginning. But my original contacts were with Ed. Wes did come on the staff some time before I left, but I think I only met Wes once, <sup>maybe</sup> ~~or~~ twice. I didn't have any major involvement with Wes.



GREENE: But in terms of interviews, would you decide yourself, or decide and have somebody else make the final decision?

RYAN: Well, you know, most of those things didn't require an immediate response. A request came through and we'd get back to them with a response, and usually in the meantime we'd have an opportunity to talk <sup>to</sup> with the senator himself. And he used to make those decisions, is my recollection. What we'd try to do was, when he was coming in from an airport or he had to make a trip to someplace, is we'd, rather than just to sit in the car, we'd meet him with whoever it was that he would agree to be interviewed by and conduct the interview in the car. They didn't seem to mind that, it gave them a half hour with no telephones, or whatever it was, and it worked out pretty well, and we used his time most efficiently. That's the way we used to do that. But I think most of that was reactionary. They'd call and ask, and we'd get it approved and then set it up at a time when there was some air in his schedule.

GREENE: What <sup>are</sup> ~~were~~ your feelings about the press's attitude towards him? He complained so much, for instance, about the New York Times. Did you have the feeling in that first year that they were hard to deal with, that you couldn't get their . . .

RYAN: I think he went before the editorial board on a couple of occasions during that period, but that was a closed session, and I wasn't there to hear whether they really were tough or they weren't tough.

GREENE: But in terms of the coverage he was getting, you didn't find that a frustrating <sup>thing?</sup> . . .

RYAN: Well, there were certain people on the Times that we could work

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[Martin Arnold]

with. For example, there was a ~~(Martin)~~ Marty Arnold, if my  
memory is correct. Marty was <sup>a hundred</sup> 100 percent in favor of the senator.  
As a matter of fact, I think Marty Arnold was up for consideration  
as press secretary. And when we had a specific . . . (INTERRUPTION)  
. . . a specific event that we were going to go to that we thought  
should be covered, we'd call somebody like Marty Arnold and Marty'd  
come out. There were times during at least that first year that  
Marty wrote excellent articles that were published. There were  
other times that he wrote articles that were not published. So  
there was certainly some frustration. Marty was friendly. Not  
all of them were, and if we couldn't get somebody like Marty to  
cover the event. . . . Yet we did not get the kind of writeups that  
we would have prepared if we were doing them ourselves. (But I guess  
in general we weren't terribly happy with the coverage, but I don't  
recall any event during the course of the year where we felt that  
it was really improper, or reporting that was really subject to  
severe criticism. There might have been, Bobbie, I just don't  
remember one. I know that there were a lot of complaints and there  
was an awful lot of talk about it, but there always is? If you don't  
get what you want, you're always going to complain. But I don't  
remember that it was really that severe that we felt that it was  
improper.

GREENE: You mentioned in the beginning, when you were talking about the  
problems in terms of coming onto the staff in the first place, that  
you had agreed with the men you were going into partnership with  
that it would be for only a year?

RYAN: Right.



GREENE: Is that the reason that you decided to leave the staff, <sup>just</sup> ~~was~~ to hold to that commitment, or were there other problems?

RYAN: Well, we had. . . . Well, specifically, the answer to it is this, that we had, I had agreed with them and we had opened up an office, and they no longer were able to handle the business that we had generated <sup>through</sup> to that law firm. So that was a reason. Now there was some thought given at that time as to whether to stay on and ~~to~~ hire or to bring, either <sup>to</sup> hire associates or to bring in another partner and stay on for a while longer; or to just leave and go over and do the work myself, which is what I had originally agreed. And I think, ~~that~~, oh, ~~I think that~~ it was a combination, Bobbie. I think that I had really had enough, you know, of staff duties at the time, ~~and~~ I think I was looking forward to getting out and practicing law. And there were certain tensions that were starting to crop up between me and Jerry Bruno, for example, that, you know, ~~I just~~, were better handled by leaving the staff. So although I think I could have stayed on if I really wanted to by finding another partner for the law firm, I think that sticking to the original schedule was probably in everybody's best interest.

GREENE: What was the senator's reaction when you discussed it?

RYAN: Well, it wasn't one of any great encouragement to keep me on the staff. But ~~I don't~~, you know, I think it was a typical reaction of an employer to employee that was going on someplace else. I remember talking to him about it. We were driving up Park Avenue, as a matter of fact. And it was nothing dramatic, it was just an announcement and ~~then~~ an acceptance, ~~and, you know,~~ and the typical

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things that one says; "gee, we're very sorry to lose you, and so on and so forth, "but best luck." It was not an attempt to keep me, certainly.

GREENE: Did he ask at all for your feelings on the picture at that point, any suggestions you might have had?

RYAN: From a staff standpoint, as to who would take over?

GREENE: ~~Yeah.~~ Well, that, and also just in terms of the way the office was going and things that might be done to change it?

RYAN: Well, I think that we did discuss who should take it over. I think it was a foregone conclusion that Tom Johnston was going to, and Tom Johnston was clearly the right person to do it. So that was discussed. I think we did discuss Polly at the time, as to whether Polly should be continued in that position.

GREENE: What was the decision on that?

RYAN: Well, I think that it was one of dissatisfaction, but the problem was finding a replacement. I think that Polly did leave at some time later on, I don't know under what conditions. In fact, I don't even know who took over the job that Polly was doing. But Polly was really not, you know, a top-notch staff assistant. I don't think that there was anybody else on the staff at that time that, you know, would really warrant consideration. It was just really the three of us with some support. But I do remember talking about Tom, I do remember talking about Polly.

GREENE: And just in terms of the operation of the Senate office? Was he seeking, in other words, any kind of constructive advice or criticism as you were leaving?

RYAN: I think so. Yeah, I think so.



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I specifically don't remember it, but I do remember having a conversation about the office. I remember having a conversation, which I felt at the time was more important, and that was a greater involvement on his part with some of the political leaders throughout the state. I felt that that was being neglected, and I do remember specifically mentioning that. I think that at ~~that~~ point he was not coming to New York as often as he had been in the habit of doing it, and think that that was discussed; more frequent visits to New York. I think we also discussed the fact that when he wanted to take a vacation, why not look at New York first? You know, he was running all over the country, visiting states all over the country and not visiting his own, and I think we discussed that. Gee, I can't remember anything else. Bobbie.

GREENE: Did he ever discuss with you at any point getting a black on the staff, or some blacks? Was that, at that point, of some thing interest or concern to him?

RYAN: Well, we had a black on the staff from the beginning.

GREENE: Who was that?

RYAN: Our receptionist, [Jacqueline] Jackie Greenidge, [Jacqueline Greenidge] was black.

GREENE: Oh, I didn't know that.

RYAN: Yeah. And we had a Puerto Rican on the staff, [Angelina] Angie Cabrera. [Angelina Cabrera]

GREENE: Right.

RYAN: And although they were immensely competent, both of them, their employment or looking for them originally went back to a decision to broaden the base of the staff from an ethnic standpoint.

GREENE: But in terms of one of the top posts?

RYAN: No.

GREENE: I mean, I know of course eventually they did by getting (Earl G.)  
[Earl G. Graves] Graves but . . .

RYAN: Yeah. But no, not at that time.

GREENE: Another thing that just occurred to be when you were talking, . . .

(INTERRUPTION) It just occurred to me while you were talking  
that the New York mayoral race would have been going all through  
this whole period while you were ~~there~~.

RYAN: It was.

GREENE: I should have realized that before. What involvement did you have  
in that, <sup>were</sup> and what/your observations of his interest and involvement?

RYAN: Well, at some point, and I don't remember exactly what point it  
was. . . . Well, initially we were asked to get him to take a  
position in the primary, which we stayed out of. We stayed out  
of it for a good reason: a United States senator should not be  
involved in a primary for any office in the state that he  
represents. That created a lot of problems, because had he  
taken a position, you know, it would have cleared up the primary  
right away; but he didn't. I think it was clear who was going  
to win the primary from the beginning. But the involvement  
took place at a point some time after the primary, when (Abraham D.)  
[Abraham D. Beame] Abe Beame was selected. They opened up campaign headquarters at  
the Summit Hotel.

Our first involvement, I think--you know, aside from the  
niceties and the conversations back and forth--was, we were  
assigned an office over at the Summit, and I think Tom spent  
a fair amount of time over there. Now, that was to develop some



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of the issues that ~~were~~ going to come up so that we could protect him<sup>asked</sup> as he went out on campaign stops and was about these issues, he'd be able to have thought through clearly just what the problem was and what the possible solutions were. So I think that the first involvement was to find out what the issues were on a local basis, and to think them through and to come up with a position, and I believe Tom did that. ¶ Then we got involved in having to try to make campaign stops with him. Well, you couldn't take a chance on the staff that Beame had put together. And when there was going to be a joint appearance, if there was no crowd or it was badly planned, or if any of the normal routine things which an advancement man takes care of were not done, it would have reflected on him. So that we then, once the decision was made to get involved with joint appearances, we then were thrown into a campaign. We then had to get involved in Abe Beame's scheduling. We had to know where he was going, who asked him to attend, why he had decided to go to that particular spot, who was going to be there, and what ramifications if any were there for us to think about as far as the senatory was concerned. And then the involvement got deeper and deeper, because now all of a sudden Abe Beame was Bob Kennedy's candidate, and now a loss by Abe Beame was more important than it had been, certainly, up until that point. ¶ Well, at some point I think a decision was made that even the white papers, or the press releases, that Beame was putting out were less than, or, <sup>were</sup> subpar. And I think Peter Edelman came up at that point. ¶ I don't think it was Adam, I believe it was Peter that came up -- and worked on some of the press releases and the white papers

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that were put out by Beame. At some point, Joe Dolan came up. and I think Joe spent probably a couple of months in New York just prior to the election, working with the Beame staff. So that at that point all of us were involved. We even went back into the '64 cards and pulled out some of our advancement, and to a degree, took over at least the external operations of the campaign. So that the involvement was very great from sometime after the primary, up to and including election day.

GREENE: What's your impression of how the senator felt about this and about <sup>Beame</sup> ~~being~~ personally? . . .

RYAN: I don't know that I can really answer about Beame personally. He felt from the beginning he was a loser.

GREENE: Well, I mean Beame as a yeah. . .

RYAN: And nobody really likes to put that much effort in and get that close to someone that you know from the beginning is going to be a loser, but we didn't really have a choice. And especially once we started to get into it, we just got absorbed in that campaign. Well, it helped him to the minor degree that he would support local candidates once selected through the electoral process, but certainly didn't help him in the long run, being associated with Abe and that whole election, or that whole campaign.

GREENE: Did you get a feeling for how he might have regarded Lindsay at that stage?

RYAN: Yes. Well, I think it was probably summed up . . . (INTERRUPTION)  
His whole attitude towards John Lindsay can be summed up in one expression, and that was. . . . Not at the time of the campaign or immediately following the campaign but after John Lindsay was



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sworn in, we went down to pay a courtesy call on the new mayor in city hall. And it lasted about a half hour. Came out and got in the back of a car and started up towards midtown, and we asked him how he felt about the new mayor, and his response was, "He's a very shallow man." So that I think that that pretty well sums up how he what he felt about John Lindsay at that point, and I don't know that he ever changed that opinion.

GREENE: <sup>let's</sup> Back you up a little bit. Before the primary, even though he, for obvious reasons, refused to get involved, did you have much of an idea of who he really would have preferred, what his feelings were, and if there was any behind-the-scenes effort to influence it, or did he really stay as totally out of it as it seems?

RYAN: I could probably come up with a better response if I knew who the other candidates were at the time. I just can't remember. I think ~~[Frank D.]~~ <sup>[Frank D. O'Connor]</sup> O'Connor was one. I just don't think that from the group that were available that there was any one that he would have liked to have backed, because even though he always took the position that he wouldn't get involved in a primary, if he had a strong feeling, that feeling would be communicated one way or another, although not publicly. I think in that one he really didn't have a choice. I mean, we had a bunch of lackluster people running for mayor and . . .

GREENE: <sup>oh,</sup> Yeah. It's funny, I can just see a bunch of names. I remember ~~[Daniel P.]~~ <sup>[Daniel P. Moynihan]</sup> Moynihan was one of those that was involved early on.

RYAN: Oh, he ran for chairman of, for president of the city council, I think. And I don't think that Moynihan was anybody that he <sup>would</sup> wanted at that point.

GREENE: NO. <sup>it was</sup> But whose ticket was Moynihan on? <sup>believe, I can't</sup> Oh, gee, I can't think of anybody.

RYAN: I mean, I can't remember.

GREENE: Yeah. But my impression is that because of Moynihan's placement on the ticket, that was one that he was interested in, although I don't know that it was a very strong feeling.

RYAN: I'd like to think not. Yeah, I'd like to think not.

GREENE: I should have that information, but it's just that it entirely slipped my mind that we should talk about that today.

Okay. Then if you don't have anything else on the mayoral race, or up to the time that you leave the staff, we can do that one Medicaid bill that we talked about <sup>last time,</sup> ~~with~~ after you went to work for Travia.

RYAN: Well, I was an assistant counsel to the speaker of the assembly for a two-year period, '66-67 and I think '67-68--or maybe just backed off one year. And I think it was right after I had left the staff. . . . Well, I left the staff in January, and then I think around February, I was appointed as assistant counsel, when I was back practicing law. And I think it was in May or June of that year that this Medicaid issue came before the assembly. As it was being structured in the assembly, there were very serious questions about certain provisions in the bill. <sup>It</sup> I forget how it got to the Washington office, but I think that I sent a copy of either a draft, or called Adam or Peter about that particular bill. Shortly afterwards, Peter was assigned as the legislative assistant to work on that, because of the importance of that bill, or how important we thought it was at the time. <sup>It</sup> There was another assistant counsel assigned to Travia at the time named Margolese, Ed Margolese. And Ed and myself and Peter Edelman got together. And then I think at either the second or the third



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meeting, a Dr. ( ) McCarthy, who was I believe on the Columbia [University] staff at the time . . .

GREENE: Right.

RYAN: . . . Came up as an adviser. And the four of us, after we all got together, stayed up I think for one twenty-four hour period, rewriting that bill as we thought it was, should have been structured. Got support, and I think substantial support, from Tony as to the changes. And my recollection was that we then went out, had it printed <sup>like,</sup> overnight. Those bills have to age for three days on the desk of the assemblyman before you can bring it on for a vote, unless you get a specific, I think they call it a message, which eliminates that three-day aging. We got the message in that regard and brought it on, and it was passed in the assembly in its revised state. So I think it was one time when <sup>re</sup> there was a relationship between the senate office and the local legislature that resulted in a bill, that at least in my opinion at the time and those certainly assigned by the senator at the time, that was in better form coming out of the assembly than it <sup>would</sup> have been had we not been involved.

GREENE: Do you remember the particular issues that they were most concerned about? Did you attempt to get them involved on the issues that you were concerned about, or did they come to you with the issues and you . . .

RYAN: I think I brought it to their attention.

GREENE: What were the things that you were disturbed about?

RYAN: Well, I think one that I can remember was, the guidelines that they had used on determining what a catastrophic illness was, and the method of determining that catastrophic illness. There were no objective standards in the bill as originally written

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but it was to be assigned to the Department of Welfare, who would then make a determination. It was my feeling that ~~that~~<sup>t</sup> was a little too vague for a piece of legislation, but that a piece of legislation should have specific objective guidelines as to what is a catastrophic illness; And in determining the net worth of a person, to determine whether or not those funds were available for them, there should have been specific guidelines.

GREENE: I don't know if this is the same thing that I had in mind, but I keep seeing the figure of \$5700 dollars mentioned. It's my impression that that would be a maximum income, is that right, to allow someone to be eligible for Medicaid? Would that be what that \$5700 figure would be? That was ~~(Nelson A)~~ Rockefeller's. *[Nelson A. Rockefeller]*

RYAN: I think that, there is some recollection on my part. I think that initially it was something like \$6500, and then I think we proposed something like \$4800, and I think that was a result of a compromise. I know that there was a good deal of argument that went on as to what should be that income level to determine eligibility for benefits. I think that was another point that we got directly involved in, and I think the result of that was a compromise. But I, you know, without having a file folder on that, I just can't remember.

GREENE: Well, the figure that I had seen was \$5700 dollars, which was Rockefeller's figure. And in fact I'm taking this mostly from Peter's interview, that he was appalled at that and thought it . . .

RYAN: Too high?

GREENE: . . . ~~INC~~redible. No, that's why I'm not certain of what the



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figure represents, because he was saying he was appalled at it, that they wanted it to be at least \$6700, so that's why I assumed it was a maximum income. *What else . . .*

RYAN: The figure, if I remember it correctly, was a figure of family income.

GREENE: Family of four, right, that's what they're talking <sup>about</sup>.

RYAN: And if you exceeded the figure that was finally written into the bill, you were un . . .

GREENE: Right.

RYAN: . . . Medicaid benefits were unavailable. If you were below that figure, they were available. We were fighting for a low figure. The state was working for a high figure, and the result was a compromise, is my recollection. We wanted <sup>a</sup> the figure down on the \$4000 range, \$4800 or something like that.

GREENE: But that would . . .

RYAN: Make more people.

GREENE: . . . ~~Reduce~~ the number of people.

RYAN: ~~NO~~. It would. . . . Okay. All right. I'm twisted. I'm backwards.

GREENE: You see, that's why I was <sup>yes</sup> ~~yeah~~, I see.

RYAN: All right. We were fighting--that's right--for a higher income level to make more people eligible.

GREENE: Right, which would be the \$6700.

RYAN: And got into having had surveys determined as to how many more people that would make eligible, so I was just backwards.

GREENE: Right.

RYAN: Yeah.

GREENE: Well, my understanding is that you settled on something like \$6000 finally, that was the compromise between \$5700 and \$6700.

RYAN

RYAN: I don't remember. I know that there was quite a divergence between what they wanted in the bill, and my lower limb recollection was \$4800. I think my recollection is that you were right, I thought it was around \$5700; I didn't think it was as high as \$6000, but I think we wanted something like \$6500. So I think that . . .

greene: Okay. Well, I, it's inconsequential and probably easy enough to check but . . .

RYAN: But it was a very definite benefit that we <sup>thought</sup> felt we conferred by our presence, and we felt our presence was instrumental in raising the eligibility level, which included many more people.

GREENE: And what was the other. . . . What were some of the other things on that issued, do you remember? Wasn't one of them, whether or not, you were trying to get as much of it into the Health Department [Department of Social Welfare] as possible and out of the Welfare Department, as much as possible. . . .

RYAN: That's the role that McCarthy played. He helped us with background information and I think that that recommendation was his; I guess, because the Health Department's run by doctors and he had much greater confidence in doctors than he did in social workers. But regardless of what the background on it was, <sup>he</sup> was he fought vigorously to have the determinations taken from the Welfare Department, on the ground that, you know, it's kind of humiliating if your income is under \$6000 dollars, to end up in, <sup>welfare</sup> well, you're not really, <sup>you</sup> or we don't really feel that you're a welfare patient. The only reason why you're even considering benefits is because you've had some major illness in the family, and that shouldn't throw you into the Welfare Department. That's humiliating to people. But to be in the



Department of Health is where you properly belong, because it's an illness that caused this shortage of funds. So I think from a philosophical standpoint he was correct, and I also think that his point was deeper, and that is that the competence level in the Department of Health is higher than it is in the Department of <sup>[Social]</sup> Welfare. So I think that was something that he fought vigorously for. I don't remember the outcome. I don't remember whether <sup>it was</sup> we shifted to the Department of Health or not.

GREENE: Well, my understanding is that eventually you compromised with Rockefeller and one small section was allocated to the ~~Health~~ Department and the rest remained in welfare, because the way the federal law was written in 1965, it was required that it be administered by the ~~Welfare~~ Department, and that you had . . .

RYAN: Okay, you just, you brought something back.

GREENE: Is that right?

RYAN: Yeah. The wind was kind of taken out of our sails because we did find out that the federal program had been set up for administration by the local welfare departments. Our victory was a very minor one. There was something thrown over as a bone but the bulk of it was required to be administered by welfare. I think that . . .

GREENE: And for a while there, when you saw how little Rockefeller was putting in the Health Department, there was suspicion that he might actually be trying to undercut you, because it was all written into one provision that could have easily been just lifted out and would have left the whole thing to. . . . Does that ring a bell at all?

RYAN: No.

GREENE: You don't remember any suspicions about Rockefeller's motivation, or was that always there?

RYAN: Always there, yeah. We always suspected that. But I don't remember it in that regard.

GREENE: What did you think of McCarthy?

RYAN: I liked him. I thought he was immensely persuasive. He was a sort of a guy, as I recall, who got fully committed to something of this nature, and was certainly bright enough to understand the scope of it and was immensely persuasive when he was arguing in favor of it or against what they were proposing. I thought he was very effective and liked him quite a bit. As a matter of fact, I think after we finished work on this, I think I drove him back to New York, and I remember having a long talk with him coming back in the car and I thought he was just a, well, a competent proponent of his position and a hell of a nice guy personally. So I liked him.

GREENE: What about Peter's competence in <sup>this</sup> things?

RYAN: Peter's good. /I think is very good. I think Peter's very bright.

I think Peter did in very short order put this into focus. [Interruption]

END TAPE II

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Begin Tape 3

GREENE: Okay. I was just asking you about whether you felt Peter was actually following McCarthy's lead more than leading the whole thing himself.

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imposed  
sequence.



RYAN: Well, I don't believe that, prior to Peter's arrival in Albany, he had ever given very much thought to this problem. I don't think he had done any work on it. So I think he was green with regard to the problem, and certainly McCarthy was not. He was filled with facts and figures when he arrived in Albany. So I think that everybody who was there making an effort to revised the proposed/legislation piece of did look to McCarthy. I mean, I think I've already admitted that I thought he was very persuasive, so I'm sure that some of the points that McCarthy was in favor of found their way into the bill. I think that Peter did do a considerable amount of research, telephone calls and so forth, after he arrived in Albany, which helped him put it into focus. And I suppose that the result of that three or four, five days' effort was probably something that Peter was satisfied with. However, I do think that McCarthy was an influential figure during that period.

GREENE: Did you have any direct contact with the senator on this?

RYAN: No.

GREENE: No?

RYAN: No, if there was contact during that period, and I suspect that there probably was, it was through Peter; it was not through me. I was, you know, no longer a staff assistant at that time and he had a staff assistant in Albany, so that the contact would have been strictly through Peter. Excuse me. (INTERRUPTION)

GREENE: Were you, at that point, sort of serving as a middleman between Kennedy's people and (Anthony) Travia?

RYAN: Probably the better way to characterize it would be that, you know,

I was somebody who had spent a great deal of time on the senator's staff, was aware of what I thought he should be involved in, and felt that this was something that he should be involved in and did it out of, for want of a better word, loyalty or concern than I did because I fashioned myself as any intermediary looking out for his interests. I think it was just that I in fact did do that but had not been charged with that responsibility. (INTERRUPTION)

GREENE: Would you say that. . . . Were they, -- I don't want to confuse it. *get a little of there*  
Were they giving you. . . . Let's put it this way. Were they trying to get Travia to take a certain position and to move in the direction that they wanted him to move in, and they were using you as kind of their. . . .

RYAN: Unquestionably, yes.

GREENE: . . . OR were they dealing directly with him?

RYAN: Unquestionably, yes. (INTERRUPTION)

GREENE: I was asking you about whether they were giving you messages to take to Travia in terms of what they wanted him to do, or were they dealing directly with him?

RYAN: Well, my recollection was that when we realized this was something that he should get involved with--that is, he, the senator--he called Tony, indicated his interest in the bill, and the result of that. . . .

(INTERRUPTION) . . . following the telephone call, Tony Travia permitted (Edward *is Edwin Margolis*) Ed Margolese and myself to work on the bill, with the revisions that we thought that were in the best interests of the state. It was then that Peter Edelman came to town, and Dr. McCarthy. And of course the result of those next five or six days' effort was the preparation of the revised bill.



GREENE: But in terms of the day-to-day activities, would you be giving Travia guidance on what the senator's wishes were, or were they talking directly, or wasn't there any need for that kind of thing?

RYAN: The bulk of the legislation that goes through our assembly or our senate has little or no federal overtones. There were probably not a handful of bills during those two years when there were any federal overtones, or certainly any reason for any involvement on the part of a United States senator, so that the involvement was very minimal.

GREENE: But on these things that he was interested in, these provisions in this particular bill, would you be talking to Travia regularly in terms of the...

RYAN: Well, Travia just assigned the whole matter to Margolese and myself to come up with a revised bill, and that's exactly what we did. So that we, in that respect, got complete cooperation from Tony.

GREENE: Yes. Okay. Can you remember other Democrats getting involved with the senator's people at all? Blumenthal, who was then head of the health committee, and (INTERUPTION) ... that the senator might have been working with that you remember, Blumenthal in particular. Did he get involved?

RYAN: Well, I think Blumenthal and (Stanley) Steingut were--oh, and (Joseph) Zaretzki on the other side, Zaretzki's legislative assistant was a fellow named ( ) Bernie Luger. We were able to keep lines open into the Senate through Bernie. And we were able to get a pretty good feel on how things were going to go in the assembly through Al Blumenthal and through Stanley, and of course through Tony. But I don't believe that there were any other members

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of the legislature. . . . Well, yeah, There was a senator from Queens . . . .

GREENE: I know who you mean.

RYAN: . . . who now is a . . . .

GREENE: ~~[Seymour R.] Thaler~~ [Seymour R. Thaler]? ~~Thaler~~

RYAN: . . . who now is a federal. . . . No.

GREENE: No, not Thaler? He got involved too, didn't he, Sy?

RYAN: Well, not to any degree. Who's now, I believe, a federal judge.

No. No. Was it (Robert ) Bobby Brownstein? There was one other senator, and my recollection is he was from Queens, who was very close with the West Side reform group, that we did work with. My memory was that he was very bright and one that did his homework, and did his homework well. There were other Democrats that we used to get information from, like ( ) Ben Altman, and people like that, but I don't remember that there was any relationship or any lines of communication that had been opened up where the senator would get any benefit from it or could use them to any degree when he wanted to attempt to take a position on legislation.

GREENE: Were you reasonably satisfied with the compromises that finally came about?

RYAN: Well, I don't remember that, but I do remember thinking that we had done as much as we could, and thinking that we had made some steps in the right direction, and that it was certainly better than if it had been left unattended. So I don't remember being satisfied, you never really are. But I do remember being pleased that we did get involved, and we did accomplish certain things that we tried to.

GREENE: Last time, you said that many of the provisions that Kennedy and



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you wanted that you did get enacted at that time have turned out to be ill-conceived, and I was wondering, you know, what you had in mind.

RYAN: Well, I don't really know what the present state of that Medicaid bill is because, to be perfectly frank, ~~Bob~~ when I left the assembly, ~~these are,~~ well, that's just one of the things that you forget about when you move on to something else. My recollection is that I have read articles since that time that cast serious question on the whole program. I don't even know whether that program is still being administered. I think that it's been phased out to a great degree and that some of the things that we fought for, thinking that they were in everybody's best interests at the time, I think I've read since have either been eliminated or amended or just totally written off the books. But, you know, I'd have to go back and do a little research before I could really respond to that.

GREENE: Do you remember any reluctance, particularly towards the end of this whole thing, after it was over, on Robert Kennedy's part to go to the public with it? I was thinking of, I'd heard that towards the end there was already a backlash because of the rise in the cost<sup>s</sup> resulting from it.

RYAN: Yeah. {INTERRUPTION}

GREENE: I was just thinking that I had heard there were already starting to be cries of, you know, the high cost that this new legislation was going to involve. . . .

RYAN: Well, there's no question that it was very costly as originally drafted, and it was more costly when we finished with it.

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GREENE: Right.

RYAN: I think initially there was a joint announcement, I think, with the senator and Tony Travia about the bill where certain credit was given to the senator for his involvement. I think that shortly afterwards there ~~were~~ these cries from those that were opposed to the amendments, or the proposed amendments, that we had increased the cost dramatically, and I think that turned out to be the case. But, you know, I don't really. . . . Well, my feeling at the time was that that wasn't really terribly relevant; the relevancy that we should consider was, were we covering people that needed coverage? Not being on his staff at the time, I didn't really know what his reaction to all of that was. But I certainly remember that there were a lot of articles written at the time, that, yes, he got involved, but look what he's done. I don't know whether he then backed off that issue or what. I just don't remember.

GREENE: Well, that's all I have unless you have some general comments or observation on anything else or about him personally.

RYAN: No, I think that, I think he was a remarkable man. I think that the senator came into his own shortly after the 1960 election and I don't suppose we're ever going to see again a dramatic growth in a person as we did in Robert Kennedy in his responsibility towards the American public in that period, 1960 to 1968. I think that most of his ability was developed during that period by taking on great issues and great problems, facing them squarely, and honestly approaching them. I feel that that exposure that I had to him was something that I'll never forget, and I'm just kind of sorry



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that he's not here today. I don't think we'd be in the position that we're in today if he was. I was very pleased to have spent that time with him, honored, and felt that he was on his way towards doing a remarkable job for this country; and am very upset by the fact that he didn't get that opportunity at a post where he could have done even more good than he did in the position that he held.

GREENE: Good. Thank you very much.